

Eat Smart...It's in the Garden

This newsletter is provided by
the S.C. Department of
Agriculture

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Upcoming Events:

- **SC Ag in the Classroom Summer Institute for Teachers**—June 2010
- **South Carolina School Garden Workshop** — there will be an SC School Gardens workshop in Columbia on June 21, 2010 at the Clemson Sandhills Lakehouse in NE Columbia. Register today at: www.agriculture.sc.gov

Putting in a "Carolina Fence Garden" in Greenville. Donna Yarborough

Greenville Tech Charter High School (GTCHS), located on the campus of Greenville Technical College in Greenville, SC, offers Arts Intersession (related arts mini-courses) the first week in January. GTCHS invites artists in various media to instruct subjects like wire art, stone cutting, scrapbooking, pastels, beading, cartooning, film making, floral design, guitar, embroidery, photography, performance poetry, nature sketchbook journaling, tile mosaics, and more. Master Gardeners, Donna Yarborough and Rebecca McKinney, instructed the students in gardening fundamentals and assisted them in developing a Carolina Fence™ Garden.

A Carolina Fence™ Garden, developed by the South Carolina Wildlife Federation, is a simple landscape element which incorporates native and historical values. The split rail fence, with historical significance, is the base of the garden with everything going on or around it. Showcasing official state symbols (stone, flower, vine, wildflower, bird, butterfly, and insect), students construct a habitat which will attract and support native species. Greenville Technical College selected the site for the garden: near the Reedy River



GREATER GREENVILLE
Master Gardeners

on the back of the campus. The area has no water supply

Day One: In the morning, Master Gardeners explained what was involved in the Clemson Master Gardener program, what a Carolina Fence™ Garden contained, and what a garden needs as far as sun, soil, and water. Students received handbooks (see attached) on CD's.

In the afternoon, students cleared the garden of debris and took a soil sample.

Day Two: Lynne Lucas, a Master Gardener and an expert on native plants, spoke to the students about why we should use native plants in the landscape. After looking at our site, she modified the sample landscape design diagram and suggested native plants the students may use in their Carolina

Fence™ Garden. Students made sand-cast concrete leaves to be used in the garden as bird bath or bird feeder or simply as garden accents. In the afternoon, students constructed the split rail fence, marked areas for plants, and spread some (frozen) topsoil.

Day Three: Master Gardeners explained how to maintain the garden through integrated pest management with a minimum of chemical use. Using plants from their own gardens, they talked about planting and caring for the plants. Mrs. McKinney demonstrated how to make propagating pots from newspaper and soil. In the afternoon, the students learned how to plant a tree as they planted a small Eastern red cedar. They planted some of the plants the Master Gardeners brought.

Day Four: As it snowed the night before, the garden was more frozen than ever. This was the coldest day for students to be outside, but half the students braved the cold in the morning spreading mulch to finish the garden. The other half worked in the afternoon. Mrs. Yarborough talked about growing vegetables and explained about all the resources available to gardeners. Students worked with their concrete leaves.

Resources from the S.C. Soybean Board. *By Aaron Wood*

"...the South Carolina Soybean Board (SCSB) offers resources that may be used in elementary, middle and high school grade levels as supplemental instructional tools."

-Aaron Wood

As you utilize your school garden to teach students about agriculture, natural resources, biology, health, nutrition, and responsibility, the South Carolina Soybean Board (SCSB) offers resources that may be used in elementary, middle and high school grade levels as supplemental instructional tools. Since most students today are removed from agriculture, teachers are a tremendously valuable avenue to help students re-connect to the origins of the food and fiber they enjoy daily. SCSB can provide you, upon request, non-toxic four-pack crayons made of soybeans and two different types of coloring books that your younger students will enjoy. The coloring books are printed with soy ink and teach children about farming, how soybeans are grown, soyfoods, biodiesel, soy ink, and other soy products.

For middle school students, the soybean checkoff has de-



veloped a "Bean Team Soy Educational DVD Series." It contains five episodes titled: Life Cycle of a Soybean; Soyfoods; Products Made from Soybeans; Soybeans and Livestock; and Soybeans: Food, Feed and Fuel. There is also a CD with student worksheets, answer keys, and the corresponding national educational standards.

SCSB is a proud supporter of SC Farm Bureau's Ag In The Classroom Program. Teachers can apply for a week long summer institute where they will visit farms and other related agribusinesses – tuition is free and teachers can qualify for renewal credits. Other components of the program provide curricula materials and professional development work-

shops. For more information, visit www.scfb.org.

Finally, there are links to information on soy foods, soy biodiesel, the soy products guide, and so much more from the soybean checkoff on the web at www.unitedsoybean.org.

The South Carolina Soybean Board is made up of twelve farmer directors who oversee the investments of the soybean checkoff on behalf of all SC soybean farmers. Soybean producers pay into the checkoff through an assessment of 1/2 percent of the market value of every bushel of soybeans they sell. SCSB invests those checkoff dollars into research, promotion, and education to drive demand of soybeans both domestically and internationally. For more information about SCSB or the soybean industry in South Carolina, please call Aaron Wood, Executive Director, at (803) 734-1767.



Pictured at left are, edamame, or green soybeans that are edible. Often found in soups, pasta dishes or in husk like boiled peanuts! Pictured at right is a Soybean field. .



Carolina Fence Garden Cont. from page 1.

The students who went out in the morning found that the mulch pile was the warmest place to be. It was hard work for the people trying to plant in the frozen ground. In the afternoon, the morning workers began to assemble the yard art, creating a sculpture from the debris found at the site. This work of art will be added to the garden when complete.

The GTCHS Carolina Fence™ Garden completed in four days in the coldest week of the year.

What's Next? To finish the landscape, the Fence™ Gardeners will need to: a.) Add a wooden bird feeder; b.) Add a wren nesting house; and c.) Add a birdbath. The science classes will tackle the water problem, possibly using rain

barrels and drip irrigation. The Gardeners will begin propagating seeds now and will begin planting and labeling in the spring. Greenville Tech Charter looks forward to a beautiful South Carolina garden and outdoor classroom in the spring.

Farming Update from Legare Farms. *By Helen Legare-Floyd*

January: January is usually the month for plowing and preparing the fields to start planting, but due to the rainstorms and the bad weather it has been very tough. The field has been plowed but no beds done yet. Usually the beds get ready and at the right time, fertilizer is spread then plastic sheets are lay black. Onion and potatoes are always the first things planted then the root crops such as beets, turnips, and carrots. Carrots of different colors are being plant this year to see if color makes a difference. The last of the collards and broccoli from the fall crop in January are finished. Maintenance continues to be done.

February: February has certainly been a wet dreary month. There were days when it would have been nice to just roll over in bed and go back to sleep. There's no better sleeping weather than rainy overcast days, unfortunately it's not good farming weather. I'm glad February is our shortest month of the year. Hopefully March will bring better weather with less rain and more sunny days.

February is probably the slowest month on the farm. We're doing lots of planning and looking to the future. We have gotten the potatoes, onions and some of the root vegetables planted in spite of the rain and cold. The seed for everything else has been ordered and is here waiting to be planted but we have to sit back and wait for the ground temperature to rise. We certainly have enough moisture in the soil for seed to germinate. We have the tomatoes, peppers, and eggplant seed planted in flats in the greenhouse so we'll have plants ready to go in the field once the weather gets warm enough and we're past the threat of frost.

March and April will bring baby chicks, baby lambs, and baby calves, daffodils and new oak leaves. It is the time of year when I'm reminded of why I have chosen farming as my way of life. The days are longer, the weather is perfect, there's the smell of plowed ground in the air, and everything is greening up. I often think this is a good life but then comes the heat of July and August and I wonder why I don't have an office job.

March: March has come roaring in and there's lots of work to do on the farm. We're racing to get all the vegetables planted while hoping we are finished with frost and cold weather. We have the tomatoes, eggplant, and pepper plants in the ground. We've planted the first couple of rows of sweet corn. The first plantings of watermelon, okra, squash, zucchini, and cucumbers are planted. We still have lots of vegetables to plant and lots of second plantings. We have to try to spread out the plantings so that the harvest is spread out. Sometimes though this doesn't work and everything is ready to harvest at once.

We have new babies being born everyday. We should have about 65 baby calves this spring. We have the first hatchings of baby chicks with their foster families through the Rent A Chick program now. They will be coming back to the farm April 2nd and 3rd. The second batch of chicks will hatch this coming week. They will go out to their foster families April 2nd and 3rd as the first batch comes back to the farm. These babies won't start laying eggs until September or October. The first batch of chicks is Americana's which some people call Easter Egg chickens because they lay green eggs. The green eggs are supposed to

be lower in cholesterol. The second batch will be Rhode Island Reds, which are a good old timely breed and lay large brown eggs. My Grandmother and I raised Rhode Island Reds when I was a kid. The 4-H Club gave me 50 baby chicks in the spring. We raised them through the summer then in the fall; I carried 12 back for a show where we could win ribbons for our chickens. The 4-H Club then auctioned off our 12 chickens for the money to buy the chicks for next year. I participated in this program for many years and sold eggs. I paid for my freshman year at Clemson with egg money. It was a wonderful experience for me; I learned all kinds of lessons. I learned how to deal with death when I lost chickens, I learned economics when I had to pay for chicken food for 5 months before the chickens started laying eggs, I learned responsibility when I had to come home from school everyday and feed chickens and gather eggs. I made some money and learned a lot but the most important thing I got from raising chickens was the time I shared with my Grandmother. We formed a bond that I still feel today even though she died in 1980.

We still don't have any lambs yet but hopefully any day now. There are lots of other signs of Spring on the farm. The oak trees are putting on new leaves, the pollen is thick in the air, and the grass is starting to green up. Grass greening up causes the cows to start to wander. I have been adding lots of new pictures to our Facebook page. Hope you will join our fan page at <http://facebook.com/legarefarms>. I have pictures of chicks, vegetable planting, horseback riding, and many more.

Every month, Helen writes a monthly update talking about all of the going-ons at her family farm, Legare Farms in Johns Island, SC. Check out her entries over the past few months.



South Carolina Department of Agriculture

Wade Hampton Building
P.O. Box 11280
Columbia, SC 29211-1280

Phone: 803-734-2210
Fax: 803-734-2192
E-mail: bcrocker@scda.sc.gov



The South Carolina Department of Agriculture started the School Garden initiative to provide schools and communities alike with the opportunity to learn healthy eating habits, as well as providing an effective and fun way to instill the appreciation for local agriculture and food production in our children and everyone else involved in the garden. Incorporating the health benefits of gardening activity with the educational process of development reinforces the Department of Agriculture's goals related to promoting the consumption of locally grown products.

For more information about the S.C. School Gardens program and to share information about your school garden program, please contact Beth Crocker at (803) 734-2193 or bcrocker@scda.sc.gov

We're on the Web!

www.agriculture.sc.gov

www.scschoolgardens.blogspot.com



S.C. Department of Agriculture

Save the Date!!! - SC School Garden Workshop June 21, 2010!



Interested in starting or improving a vegetable garden at your school? Come join us for a day-long workshop to hear presentations from schools all over the state that have successfully implemented vegetable gardens into their schools and the innovative ways they are using those gardens to teach children about healthy lifestyle and eating habits, science, math, reading and a variety of other topics. This workshop will allow you to hear presentations from SC teachers who are currently using school gardens, as well as the opportunity to meet and network with other teachers who are just now getting started and hoping to plant a garden for the future.

June 21, 2010, 10:00 a.m. until 4:00 p.m.

Sandhill Research & Education Center Lakehouse
905 Clemson Road, Columbia, South Carolina

To Register, call or e-mail Beth at:
bcrocker@scda.sc.gov or (803) 734-2193